

IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SENATE

Summary

Senate is asked to note the on-going progress report in relation to improving the effectiveness of Senate.

A paper is attached for discussion which sets out proposed workstreams, their rationale and current status and possible or (in some cases) proposed ways forward.

This reflects the findings of the Minerva report on the effectiveness of Council and its Committees, work required to equip Council to make its annual assurance to HEFCE about academic quality and standards, and suggestions from elected Senators about improving the effectiveness of Senate.

Discussion about the way forward have taken place with the Senior Elected Senator (SES) and Professor Susan Blake (standing in for the SES while she is on secondment at UCLA) as well as colleagues in Student & Academic Services and with the Deputy President & Provost. These discussions have also been reflected in the attached paper

The overall aim is to ensure that Senate exercises effectively the authority delegated to it from Council through the provisions of the Charter and Statutes. This will mean, among other things that: we streamline processes and papers, making best use of data, with a concise focus on analysis, conclusions, implementation and monitoring and that ex officio and elected Senators work collaboratively in identifying in a timely way areas where debate is required. The upshot should be that the work of Senate can provide a sound basis for Council to provide an annual assurance statement to HEFCE in relation to quality and standards

Proposals for the End Year Report to Council are currently being developed further by colleagues in Student & Academic Services. We hope to provide more detail to the July meeting of Senate.

Proposals to amend Ordinance C.1 to include words that describe the role of Council in providing an annual assurance report to HEFCE are also still under discussion with colleagues in Student & Academic Services. AGC considered and was content to recommend wording that closely followed the HEFCE requirements of governing bodies. But further proposals are being developed by Student & Academic Services. We will ask AGC to consider revised proposals once these have been formulated.

One action required.

Recommended Action

Senate is asked to **note** a progress report on actions taken since the last meeting.

Publication: Open

Annex A: Improving The Effectiveness Of Senate – Possible And Proposed Workstreams

Issue	Comments and Status	Possible ways forward
<p>End-Year Reporting to Council and Calendar for Senate</p>	<p>Council has requested an annual report on academic quality and standards that reflects the format suggested by the CUC in its recent Illustrative Practice Note.</p> <p>This will require amendment to the current Senate Calendar of Business.</p>	<p><i>Student & Academic Services are considering how to develop the CUC template for use at City; and what further what changes to current processes will be helpful for future years.</i></p> <p><i>A concise account of the core quality and standards processes at City (including the elements in the CUC Note) will also be developed to set the context for Council as it considers the components of the End Year Report.</i></p> <p><i>We also need to consider how academic years will fit with annual reports; and to ensure all relevant reports to Senate are regularly received in a timely way from Boards of Studies and other sub-committees.</i></p>
<p>In-year reporting to Council: streamline reporting from Senate and the Executive on quality and standards generally</p>	<p>Proposal discussed – and welcomed - at the February Council Awayday</p> <p>Update expected at May Council.</p>	<p>Proposal is to ‘streamline’ reporting to SIPCo, Senate and Council to cover progress in implementing Education & Student Strategy and the Vision & Strategy 2026 academic output KPIs relating to education, together with performance on the TEF and NSS etc.</p> <p><i>Student & Academic Services plan to return to Council and Senate with proposals from the Executive</i></p>

<p>Reporting to Council about oversight of Academic Risk at City – could be part of in-year or end-year reporting</p>	<p>Proposal is that Council should receive explicit assurance about the management of the specific areas of academic risk highlighted in HEFCE publication of March 2016 relating to the Revised Operating Model (notably partnership and overseas provision).</p>	<p><i>There are a number of options for the way forward, which it may be possible to combine:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(1) The new Collaborative Provision Committee of Senate will strengthen oversight of this area; and will report to Senate.</i> <i>(2) City’s Risk Register is being updated to reflect the new Vision & Strategy; and ARC may wish to consider these risks in that context. This might be appropriate if the new Internationalisation Strategy were to lead to a significant increase in overseas provision, for example.</i> <i>(3) Academic Governance Committee (reporting to Senate) could take a more active role in oversight of academic risks generally, including this risk, reporting to Senate on this front via its Minutes. This would address one of the findings in the Internal Audit report on AGC.</i> <p><i>The proposed first step is to ask the Collaborative Provision Committee to identify City’s current partnership and overseas provision.</i></p>
<p>Develop ‘vision’ for effective working of Senate</p>	<p>Proposal is to examine Ordinances and Regulations to ensure the Senator role specification etc reflect accurately the work of Senate</p> <p>Note that changes to the Senator role specification would need approval from</p>	<p><i>Further proposals will be developed for the revision of Ordinance C1, and of the Senator Role Profile (Ordinance A3) and the Regulation governing How Senate Operates (Regulation 30).</i></p> <p><i>Focus of new ‘vision’ to be on how Senators add value to the work of City on academic quality and standards</i></p>

	<p>AGC and Senate; and changes to Ordinances would need approval from CGNC and Council.</p>	<p><i>through early and effective deliberation on areas for Senate decision, taking collective decisions and acting as ambassadors for those decisions once taken.</i></p> <p><i>This will include how elected and ex officio Senators can best fulfil their roles in a collaborative way, including advance identification of topics likely to need debate, and the engagement of elected Senators when papers are in early, as well as final, draft stages.</i></p>
<p>Governance changes</p>	<p>Minerva recommendations were to cut the size of Senate or establish a new Subcommittee with responsibility for ‘assurance to Council on academic quality and standards’</p> <p>Steer from Away Day discussion and from CGNC to work within existing governance, at least initially. But also a steer from CGNC to develop a form of words for City’s governing documents that sets out Council’s new responsibilities in relation to academic quality and standards.</p>	<p><i>Proposed actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(1) Develop new wording for Senate Ordinance C1 which can reflect Council’s responsibilities now for academic quality and standards – Student & Academic Services looking to improve on the draft wording considered by AGC.</i> <i>(2) Take stock of the case for wider changes to Senate composition and Subcommittees following November Council meeting which will consider this year’s assurance statement to HEFCE. The impact of the proposed workstreams to improve the effectiveness of Senate should also, by then, be becoming clear.</i> <p><i>Any proposals for change will not be finalised until a full year of the new process has been completed, to ensure coherent development.</i></p>

<p>Improving relations between Senate and Senate Subcommittees</p>	<p>Proposal is to consider whether what works well for Council Committees could also work well for Senate Subcommittees</p>	<p><i>CGNC's views on this would be very welcome.</i></p> <p><i>Possible actions include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(1) Improve Boards of Studies reports to Senate, for example through the use of a template (action already underway on this)</i> <i>(2) Elected Senators to attend Boards of Studies on a rota basis</i> <i>(3) New annual report from each Chair of a Senate Subcommittee to Senate (which could be verbal or written) Note, however, that this may not be necessary if the quality of agendas and minutes is good enough, including relevant annual review topics.</i> <i>(4) Preparing papers, identifying topics for debate etc. for Senate as for Council</i>
<p>Improve the induction of Senators</p>	<p>Proposal is to explore ways of improving induction for new elected Senators and new Student Senators.</p>	<p><i>The Governance Team and Senior Elected Senator will consider how best to induct incoming Student Senators, incoming elected Senators and incoming ex officio Senators.</i></p>
<p>Papers for Senate</p>	<p>Proposal is to improve the quality of papers to Senate and thereby to improve the quality of debate at Senate</p>	<p><i>We will amend all cover notes so that they give the history of the papers through earlier discussions, and summarise the content.</i></p> <p><i>Proposed further areas for improvement include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(1) coverage in policy papers of plans for implementation and oversight of policy –</i>

		<p><i>proposal is to explore this issue in papers as and when new/revised proposals come forward</i></p> <p><i>(2) coverage of data and analytics in papers</i></p>
Oversight and Monitoring of the impact of policies and Regulations at Senate	Note that monitoring the quality of student educational experience and outcomes (and the processes that support this) is central to the work of Senate	<p><i>A phased plan for change may be needed. A possible way forward would be to:</i></p> <p><i>(1) Develop a list of the current monitoring reports relevant to quality and standards received by Senate (eg Assessment Turnaround Times) and how each report can be made focussed and concise, avoiding overlaps where possible.</i></p> <p><i>(2) Note monitoring reports being developed, eg Sabbatical Leave Monitoring and for Research Students Who Teach policy</i></p> <p><i>(3) Develop proposals for additional monitoring reports, eg current work on progression and Personal Tutoring Policy</i></p> <p><i>(4) Develop stronger reports to Senate about the oversight of programmes through the APE process and the use of data in that process</i></p>
Data and Analysis	Proposal is that data relating to academic quality and standards should be readily available to Senators (and more widely at City) to inform debate.	<p><i>Currently there is no organised systematic storage, but in the short-term, we could set out – and communicate effectively - full details of what data is available where</i></p> <p><i>In the longer term, Modernising Administration for Students should significantly improve the availability of data. One option would be to look then at providing an online dashboard type access.</i></p>

